

Child and Family Services Update

October 2005

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Snippets from the Director

By Richard Anderson



Practice Model Nutshell

Over the past couple of months I have included in my statewide travels a brief training on a conceptual model and a tool that I had put together to assist in our understanding of the Child and Family Assessment, a way to move to “underlying needs,” a way to form a meaningful “long-term view” and a concise way of looking at our Practice Model, in a “nutshell.” (Okay! I know using the term nutshell is providing a lot of ways for you to talk about your director.) Actually, I started my early presentations to show how assessment can be done with an individual or a family and then realized that one cannot see the workings of the parts of the model, in their full sense, without showing them in context to all the other parts of engaging, teaming, and so forth. So, as the presentations proceeded I found, though staying within an hour to an hour and a half, the presentation was becoming more involved and more detailed. The progressive nature of the comments that you made and the suggestions that were given helped the process along as I moved from office to office. You were all very gracious to consider my offer. Most of all, you have collaborated with me on something that we hope will benefit future training, especially for our new staff.

I have attached the latest draft of this conceptual model, entitled “Child and Family Assessment Scale.” For those that saw an earlier version, there is now a dotted line under the “teeter-totter” representing “long-term view.” In the first presentations I had just talked about the “long-term view” but there was not a visual representation in the schematic that I had put together from your ideas. Driving one day it came to me how this could be represented in the visual. The dotted line is used to show that this is the piece of the work that will eventually come to fruition. The dotted line

shows how the tenuous point of the triangle is turned into a foundation of stability. The “Safety,” “Permanence/Stability,” and “Well-being” is to be a strong foundation instead of the shaky teetering that is allowed by the point of the triangle as a balancing point for the child and family. Services and long-term support systems fill the “long-term view” box on which the teeter-totter stands. Thanks for your help on all of this. I have been requested to visit with more front-line staff on this part of our model. You may see me at a location near you soon.

Leap Teams

Congratulations to all of those who were on region or state Leap Teams and those who had your work reviewed and received feedback!

What! Do a case review on 100% of all of our cases? That is exactly what I thought when our new department executive director posed the idea. Well, as is true about every challenge put before all of you, when it is clear and there is some support for doing it, we meet the challenge. This has been a most worthwhile endeavor but one that we did not know would turn out as good as it has. Many front-line staff and supervisors have expressed appreciation for receiving clarification of Practice Guidelines, being shown better ways for documenting, and having clearer understanding of the value in meeting the specific expectations that are in the Guidelines and reviewed in the Case Process Reviews. We will be very close to, if not completed with, a 100% review of the all of our cases by the end of October. We now have more knowledge about how much we achieve in the expectations of our work, as well as what gets in the way of our doing so. This is the most comprehensive and accurate picture we have ever had. This knowledge will help each person to succeed. Thanks, again, to all of you for the great way you have responded to this additional workload and the stress of having your work looked at in detail.

Meeting With A Judge From Poland

Patti Van Wagoner and I had the opportunity to meet with a visiting judge from Poland who is traveling the states. We spent a little over an hour talking through an interpreter. The judge was very impressed with the way we approach child welfare and domestic violence. He told us that when a child is removed in Poland the typical placement is in an orphanage. The major other resource is the use of communities that offer their village to a youth. It seems as though these placements are more like orphanages that are not in buildings but put together in the community where several families provide care for a group of children. He seemed to be not very impressed with how the village concept was working. He did say that they have started to use some resource families. It is always so helpful to have someone view our work from a different cultural experience and express views on our approach. Each time we described a portion of how we do our work the judge responded with “talk, talk, talk” (spelling?). I thought that maybe he was stating that we were just blabbering and not really making sense or being real with him. I then asked the interpreter if this was an affirmative statement and

was told the “tak” means “yes.” All along he was affirming all that we were saying as a better way to work with children and families.

Child Welfare Institute

Thanks to all that in any way helped with the very well prepared and presented Child Welfare Institute for 2005. We have received very high evaluations from all who attended. Every workshop that I was able to attend was packed with valuable content. We also congratulate all those who received awards during the conference. Here is a list of all those who were recognized for their valuable contributions this past year and some that were recognized for many years of valued service.

Name	Award
State Office	
Spencer Morgan	Marty Palmer Award for Excellence in Child Welfare Education
Irl Carlson	Marty Palmer Award for Excellence in Child Welfare Education
Department of Workforce Services	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare
Robert Lewis	Lifetime Achievement Award
Richard Anderson	Lifetime Achievement Award
Eastern Region	
Calvin Emmett	Caseworker of the Year Award
Linda Murray	Lifetime Achievement Award
Kevin Hines	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare
Northern Region	
Rosie Holmes	Caseworker of the Year Award
Jean Lee Carver	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare
Salt Lake Valley Region	
Wendy Armstrong	Caseworker of the Year Award
LaRay Brown	Lifetime Achievement Award
Heber Tippetts	Lifetime Achievement Award
Suzann Nowels	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare
Southwest Region	
Tina Call	Caseworker of the Year Award
Katye Lowry	Lifetime Achievement Award
Shandra Powell	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare
Western Region	
Angela Robbins	Caseworker of the Year Award
Barbara Bair	Lifetime Achievement Award
Ann Nielson	Community Partner Award for Service to Child Welfare



Questions for the Director

I recently was in a meeting where our staff asked many pertinent questions of members of a citizen group that works with the division. The group could not answer the questions, but the answers are in our division. I filled the gap by waiting and then answering the questions. I realized that there are many questions that all of us have about our work, Practice Model, Practice Guidelines, community partners, laws, personnel matters, and so on. I want everyone to have some readily available source to obtain answers. We are looking to using the Update or the website or something that is readily available where you can send in your questions and get an answer. We will call this "Questions for the Director." Less anyone think the director thinks he has all the answers; I will get the answers for you. We plan on sending an answer to each person that sends in a question. We will then publish questions and answers that have application for all of us or a large portion of our agency. Oh, there will be those rhetorical questions and those seemingly intractable problems where the answers may not be forthcoming, but we will try. Once we have decided the method we will notify everyone. Below is an example of one of the questions that was posed to the group.

Q. "Why is there an Indian Child Welfare Act?"

A. (Short answer). This is a Federal law that was passed in 1978. Without its passage, and attention to the meaning behind the Act, we may have lost the Native American tribes of North America. Native American children were losing connections to their origins through placements outside of the tribe. Some tribes actually became extinct due to movement from the tribe, mostly to white Anglo-Saxons. Some tribes are so small that today they are facing this same threat. Not only were the tribes being lost but also cultures were disappearing. Those of us who have spent any time in Native American cultures, studied the cultures, or participated in any way know that we would never want to lose these richly spiritual cultures. The Act, among other things, said an Indian child must first be considered for placement with their tribe. If there is no available placement within their tribe, then a placement must be made with another Indian tribe. Only if neither of these is available should they be placed elsewhere.



Genetics of Early-Onset Bipolar Disorder

By Karen Greenwell, Co-Chair UT-CAN Steering Committee

Through my contact with the UT-CAN project I have been pleased to share some of my families experience with bipolar disorder. My son is currently participating in an early-onset bipolar disorder at the National Institute of Mental Health in Washington, DC. We are also taking part in a genetics study at NIMH. It is through this contact we have met and worked with Dr. Francis McMahon, Chief of Genetics (Mood Disorders) Unit at NIMH.

We are excited to again organize and sponsor a free public seminar by Dr. McMahon titled "New Discoveries in the Genetics of Bipolar Disorder". The presentation will be on Thursday, October 27th from 6:30pm to 9pm at the University of Utah Social Work Building Auditorium. Dr. McMahon did a presentation here on bipolar disorder in Feb. of 2004 that was well attended and we are looking for another full house for this public seminar.

I have attached the flyer [entitled, "Dr. McMahon flyer"] and a short bio of Dr. McMahon [entitled, "Dr. McMahon bio"]. Please help us get the word out to families, professionals, and community members about this important subject. If you have any questions, please call us at our home office 801-547-5027.

Thank you for your help, and we look forward to seeing you on October 27th.

Permanency

Keep It Real!

By Pam Russell, Independent Living Program Manager

The 2005 Transition To Adult Living Summit was a huge success. This year we drove up Provo Canyon to Aspen Grove. The weather was beautiful, the facilities were fabulous, and staff and youth attending had a great time! Youth came from Eastern, Western, Northern, and the Salt Lake Valley Regions and were accompanied by dedicated DCFS staff. We had 70 youth attend this year's conference and would like to see those numbers doubled for next year. I want to thank you all for this year's great success. It was truly amazing.

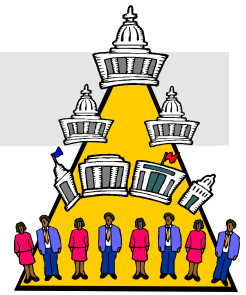


This year our theme "Keep It Real" was heard loud and clear by our youth and staff. We were very fortunate to have a national speaker, Rev. Alfonso Wyatt, come and energize all who heard him. It was, as Richard Anderson so aptly said, "a life changing opportunity for our youth." In addition to Rev. Wyatt, community partners gave of their time to provide workshops on a variety of careers, shared information on educational opportunities, and provided actual work/career demonstrations. To thank Aspen Grove for allowing us to use their wonderful facilities and recognizing the importance of community service, our youth and staff planted 125 trees and built a fabulous arts and crafts table for other families to enjoy while at Aspen Grove. Overall, a wonderful time was had by all.

But what of our youth who couldn't be there? What of the ones who missed the opportunity to hear Rev. Wyatt speak so passionately and with such conviction? If you could have seen the youth in that room...the youth who were hanging on every word...the youth who stood up and shared their feelings and dreams to the entire audience...the youth who spoke about Rev. Wyatt's words throughout the entire conference...then I would hope the importance of getting our youth to next year's conference would be paramount, and not one youth would miss this wonderful "life changing" opportunity.



Organizational Competence



Child and Family Services Passes Federal Review With Flying Colors!

By Cosette Mills, Federal Revenue Manager

On September 12-15, 2005, seven Federal reviewers from Washington, D.C. and Colorado joined a seven-member Child and Family Services review team to evaluate Utah's compliance with Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility requirements. The sample consisted of 80 foster care cases from throughout the State. Excellent preparation by the Child and Family Services eligibility and revenue teams made it possible to finish the review a day and a half before the scheduled completion.

Utah passed this Federal review for the second consecutive time by having only **one error case** of the 80 reviewed. Previously, Child and Family Services passed the 2002 review with just three errors.

The lead reviewer, one of the Children's Bureau directors in Washington, D.C., told me that he specifically chose to participate in the Utah review. He indicated that reviewing work in Utah is uplifting and helps him feel confident that the vision for good child welfare practice is achievable.

Thanks eligibility workers, revenue team members, caseworkers, supervisors, and legal partners for diligent, ongoing efforts to ensure that Child and Family Services complies with Federal requirements. Funding received through the eligibility process is critical in order to serve children and families. Thanks also to administration for your support.

Kudos, Child and Family Services!



Meet Our New Program Managers

By Carol Miller, Program Support Specialist

We are so lucky to have two new program managers at the state office! Let us introduce Cora Peterson, who is our CPS program manager, and Staci Ghneim, who is our Home-Based Services program manager.

Cora Peterson

I began my social services work with the Children's Justice Center as a victim witness advocate and prevention volunteer coordinator. I then moved over to Child and Family Services in 1995. I started in the Western Region working in Out-of-Home Care, then moved to a supervisor position over a mixed team of CPS, In-Home, and Family Preservation. I then moved to the Salt Lake Valley Region as a supervisor over CPS in the Kearns/Taylorsville office and, after completing my Master's Degree, moved to Family Preservation in the downtown Salt Lake City office. I most recently supervised the Court Services team and was a Domestic Violence coordinator for the Salt Lake Valley Region. I come to the CPS program manager position with enthusiasm and an open ear! Please feel free to contact me at 801-538-4154 or by email at CORAPETERSON@utah.gov. I really look forward to working with you!



Staci Ghneim

Hi, I'm Staci Ghneim (how do you say her name? ga-name – now isn't that easy?!). I've been given the great opportunity to work as the Home-Based Services program manager. I've worked in the Salt Lake Valley Region as a worker and supervisor in both CPS and Permanency. And now, I look forward to working with you across the state to further define, develop, and even expand our vision of what In-Home services can do – for children, families, and partners in our communities, as well as for us as workers and administrators in our agency. In these efforts, I am excited to enlist the expertise of the region administrators and those of you who have been identified by your region as "region experts." But I'm also really interested in receiving information, questions, suggestions, concerns, or feedback from anyone. So, I'll throw out a question or two...or three: What does In-Home services do for/to you in your position in Child and Family Services? What differences in practice or outcomes have you seen in voluntary versus court-ordered In-Home services? What is your vision of In-Home services? You may contact me at anytime at 801-538-4163 or by email at SGHNEIM@utah.gov.



I.O.U Children in Foster Care

By Patti Van Wagoner, Deputy Director

The federal government funded a commission to study the outcomes of children in the foster care system in our nation. This commission was called the PEW Commission and reported the results in 2004. As a result, Utah's Chief Justice, Christine Durham, and former Governor Walker sponsored a workgroup called the Initiative on Utah Children in Foster Care. Utah's own Judge, Judge William Thorpe, was a member of the PEW Commission and presented the findings to the workgroup stating that Utah was one of the states with the lowest number of children in foster care and shared that we have an opportunity to lead the way in making a difference for the youth in our system. This I.O.U workgroup is made up of top leaders in the community including members of the faith-based community, private foundations, and political leaders. They have organized four subcommittees to focus on what they feel are areas in the child welfare system that they may be able to influence. Those areas are:

1. Kinship.
2. Transitions to Adult Living (TAL).
3. Federal Funding.
4. Community Perceptions of Human Services: A marketing approach.

These workgroups are not going to be working on what we are already working on within Child and Family Services to improve practice in these areas, but they are working to eliminate the barriers that we face in assisting families. The Kinship committee is pulling together representatives of the community to discuss ways in which communities can support kinship caregivers. The TAL committee is looking for ways to eliminate the barriers for youth to attain a driver's license and for business community involvement in mentoring youth. The Federal Funding committee has representatives from Representative Cannon's office and Senator Hatch's office and they are going to try to influence the federal government's allocation of funding to the child welfare system. The Community Perceptions Committee, a brainchild of our own Executive Director, Lisa-Michele Church, is going to find a broad based way for community leaders to speak out in terms of what is actually happening in Utah's child welfare system and other human service agencies so that public perception isn't driven by antidotal information that appears in the newspapers.

It is wonderful for us to know that the leaders of our state are joining us in striving to improve the lives of the children and the families that we work with.



Updated Calendar for Monthly Board Meetings

By Karen Sitterud, Board Chair

In our February edition of the Update, we included a calendar of monthly Board meetings. We are in hopes that as we travel around the state and hold our monthly meetings in different regions, Child and Family Services staff will attend and share their insights with us. Below is the most current list of monthly meetings:

Date and Time	Office and Region
October 25, 2005 @ 10:00 a.m.	North Ogden Office, Northern Region
November 22, 2005 @ 9:00 a.m.	13 th South Office, Salt Lake Valley Region
December 2005 (date to be determined) @ 9:00 a.m.	State Office Building, Salt Lake Valley Region
January 2006 (date to be determined) @ 9:00 a.m.	State Office Building, Salt Lake Valley Region
February 2006 (date to be determined) @ 9:00 a.m.	State Office Building, Salt Lake Valley Region
March 2006 (date and time to be determined)	Board Retreat (location to be determined)
April 2006 (date to be determined) @ 10:00 a.m.	Heber City Office, Western Region



More On Our Practice Guidelines

By Carol Miller, Program Support Specialist

As part of our ongoing work with our Practice Guidelines, each region director has assigned regional program area experts to represent the region and gather feedback from front-line staff, supervisors, support staff, and administrators to review proposed changes to Practice Guidelines. Your voice needs to be heard when we are making changes to provide clarity and better understanding of how to accomplish better outcomes with children and families. Below is the list of regional program area experts for you to be aware of so that you know there is someone in your region that is representing you.

EASTERN REGION	
Name	Program Area
Greg Daniels	Adoption and Kinship
George Glines	CPS

EASTERN REGION**Name****Program Area**

Boni Seals

In-Home

Terri Harris

Independent Living

Janet Brown

Permanency/Out-of-Home

NORTHERN REGION**Name****Program Area**

Aubry Meyers

Adoption

Rhett Fronk

CPS

Nancy Sloper

Domestic Violence

Nancy Dunn

In-Home

Joe Leiker

Kinship

Mark Robertson

Permanency/Out-of-Home

SALT LAKE VALLEY REGION**Name****Program Area**

Vickie Steffey

Adoption

Charri Brummer

CPS

Sarah Houser

CPS

Annie Valdez

Domestic Violence

Mike Boyd

Domestic Violence

Todd Otanez

Domestic Violence

Ken Hull

Independent Living

Roland Oliver

Independent Living

Kelly Powers

Kinship

Ken McCauley

Permanency/Out-of-Home

Shirley Mitchell

Permanency/Out-of-Home

SOUTHWEST REGION**Name****Program Area**

John Worthington

Adoption

Susan Goodman

Adoption

Jim Young

CPS

Shirley Owen

CPS

Marti Bown

Domestic Violence

Joni Thomas

In-Home

Kelly Stapley

In-Home

Pam Allred

In-Home

Cathy Edwards

Independent Living and Kinship

Mike Beacco

Independent Living

Bruce Zylks

Kinship

Diane Felt

Permanency/Out-of-Home

Kenny Hunter

Permanency/Out-of-Home

WESTERN REGION**Name****Program Area**

Tess Blackmer

CPS

Susan Knadler

Domestic Violence

Casey Christopherson

In-Home

Dennis Brooks

Kinship

Eric Jenkins

Permanency/Out-of-Home

All of our guidelines can be found at <http://www.hspolicy.utah.gov/dcfs/>. Our next release is scheduled for the end of September 2005, and a practice alert will be sent to notify you of the release. We really appreciate your hard work and willingness to help make our child welfare system a success!

Professional Competence



School Daze!

By Pam Russell, Independent Living Program Manager

The summer passes so quickly that when school begins, we are in a daze! I thought this would be a good time to go over the Practice Guidelines for our youth who are in custody. **303.4 Educational Services** provides excellent guidance for caseworkers when it comes to enrolling youth in school.

Efforts to maintain every youth in their existing school is always the first priority, but when that is not possible, the following steps should be taken:

1. The caseworker will inform the transferring school in advance and will consult with the staff at the former school about how to minimize disruptions of the youth's education.
2. The caseworker will obtain and complete all fee waiver forms and authorize payment of school fees not waived.
3. The caseworker will gather and provide all educational background information related to the child and provide the information to the out-of-home care providers for placement in the Home-to-Home Book within 10 days from the date of placement.
4. The caseworker, out-of-home caregivers, and youth need to meet with the school administration prior to enrollment. Other members of the child and family team may be included in this process. **Reminder: appropriate school personnel should always be included in your child and family team meetings.**
5. At any time during the youth's placement, if the child and family team has reason to suspect that the youth may have a disability requiring special educational services, the youth will be referred for assessments for specialized services.
6. **Within 10 days** of a youth's placement in foster care, the worker will refer the child to the appropriate Youth In Custody (YIC) program for assessment of which school programs will be most appropriate. **This means filling out a new YIC Intake Form each year.**

Remember, each year every youth needs to be enrolled even though the assessment may indicate that the youth does not need a particular YIC service. Services should be based on the needs of the youth and you, as the caseworker, should be involved in that assessment.

Ensuring that all youth placed in out-of-home care receive the appropriate educational services that are consistent with the youth's needs is our major objective. We want all youth to achieve his or her full educational potential.